

2006 February/March Update

Our 17th AGM is now behind us and we look forward another fruitful and successful year. The Annual General Meeting was a resounding success and was well attended at the beautiful Fairmont Empress Hotel in Victoria. We would like once again to extend our sincere thanks to every one at the BCSRA for a well organized event. FIFA Referee, Mauricio Navarro, put presented an outstanding session in the afternoon which was video taped and it is hoped to distribute it as an educational tool. The day was rounded off with the traditional banquet in the early evening. Most of us still had sufficient energy left to visit an Irish Pub and then close the place in the early hours of Sunday morning!

Below are the extended highlights of the AGM.

President's Address: Basil Gill outlined the growth of the CSRA during its 17 year history and the excellent relations maintained with the CSA. Basil has kept in constant touch with our colleagues in Atlantic Canada and they have been regular participants in our conference calls. Labrador and Newfoundland would be keen to host a CSRA annual general meeting despite some of the logistical problems associated with travel to the "Rock". Basil indicated that with just one year remaining for his term of office he would not seek another term in 2007 and urged that the search for his successor begin in earnest.

Secretary's Report: Eric Evans gave a quick rundown on the year's activities. 2005 had begun in spectacular style with a record breaking turnout at the St. Catharines AGM. Hector Vergara had visited both Victoria and Toronto as part of his Meachin Award. The Constitution had been modified slightly to permit more flexibility in setting the date of our AGM and our fiscal year had been defined. Helping to coordinate the Meachin Award accounted for well in excess of 300 letters being mailed out. A special letter of congratulations had been sent out to Sonia Denoncourt upon her appointment by FIFA to run their Women's Referee Development program. So far \$850 has been raised in 2005 towards the John Meachin Award Fund which stood in excess of \$7000 and Virginia Meachin has been kept apprised of activities regarding the Award. Sadly, there had been no applicants for the Award in 2005 but the deadline had been extended to the end of March to coincide with a number of CSA initiatives that would see Canadian officials travel outside Canada. Eric thanked Pat Harkness for his hard work behind the scenes, constantly working with Virginia to make the stringent Award criteria more flexible for officials. A breakdown of the typical costs associated with our conference calls was provided, which subsequently led to several suggestions to reduce the expense involved. Eric concluded that he had served 13 uninterrupted years as Secretary and was up for re-election. He was prepared to accept a final two year term if it was the wish of the membership.

Treasurer's Report and Auditors' Certificate: Larry Eloy presented his accounts and balance sheet. Several questions arose and it came to light that there were a number of secretarial

expenses not reflected in the accounts relating to 2005. Two auditors volunteered to review the accounts later that day (D. Cope and R. Woods) They subsequently made a number of recommendations to the Treasurer regarding accounts receivable and accounts payable. It was also recommended that the number of CSRA members in each province for whom fees had been received should be noted in the accounts.

Delegate Reports: Newfoundland Labrador Report submitted by Martin Batterson was read out by Eric Evans. Recruitment and retention along with motivating the officials is a constant challenge. Martin Batterson recently replaced Mario Simon as the Chairman of the NLSA Officials' Committee. A total of 305 officials were registered in the province with 229 minor and 76 senior, the majority being the St. John's area. Approximately 120 officials graduated from 6 new CSA entry level clinics. A Level III clinic was held as was an instructors' clinic put on by Paul Avis. A refresher clinic for senior league officials was well attended. An instructional DVD prepared by John Nielsen provided material for much discussion. Mount Pearl Soccer Association hosted the Adidas U-16 Club Championships. Only two assessors were present but they covered 30 games during the tournament. Details were provided of those officials from the province who were members of the National Program.

New Brunswick: Submitted by Ray Grenier and read by Eric Evans. The province started its new referee program in 2004 and in April 2005 Paul Avis provided the first new provincial introductory level referee course. A very successful new refresher course for referees was held. Fitness testing of referees was implemented at the refresher clinic. The province hosted the U-14 National Club championships. A new assessment program was launched which started slowly and it is hoped it will improve with time. The goal for 2006 is to improve on the quality of their officials. The number of soccer officials for 2005 was 392, down from 400 in 2004.

Manitoba: Chris Golden presented the report. He indicated that 2005 had begun disastrously with several resignations from the MSRA Executive and which saw Chris return as President. Many of the newly recruited senior referees chose not to officiate and only 85 out of 142 referees actually officiated. A total of 5839 games were scheduled and many had no referee and had to be either postponed or went ahead with a coach/player in charge. AN MSA task force has been established to try and deal with the situation. The Winnipeg Y.S.A has started a pilot project where a parent is charged with the responsibility of supervising their own supporters. It has begun to show positive results. Game fees and the reluctance to increase them is a sore point and seen by some as a reason not to suffer the abuse. Negotiations continue to have game fees raised. Relations with the provincial soccer association are a little frosty at times although a joint effort with the MSRA and the Communications Dept. of the Red River College will see a video produced in an attempt to encourage youngsters to take up officiating. Dick Derrett stepped down from his position with MSA after much good work that was appreciated by all. A number of the province's most senior officials were acknowledged as were their major game appointments. National Assessors, Frank Major and Willie Laidlaw went out of the province on several occasions.

British Columbia: Elvio Chies presented the report and welcomed every one to Victoria on behalf of the hosting province. Mauricio Navarro and Simon Fearn were congratulated on their international appointments as were a number of other National Program Officials on their achievements during the year. A number of BCSRA members participated at the Shawnigan Lake Symposium at which English FA Instructor, Ian Blanchard led the instruction. For the second year in a row no Class I clinic was held in BC. Only three people submitted applications and were sent out of the province to attend a clinic. John Nielsen resigned from the BCSA Soccer Education Committee. An award in his name has been established in recognition of the work John has done over the years.

Vancouver and Victoria will be involved in the 2007 FIFA U-20 Tournament and members hope to be active in hosting visiting officials.

Saskatchewan: Kevin Jones gave the report: Saskatchewan continues to hope for a province wide referee association but Regina and Saskatoon stand alone with active local associations. Referee development continues but few opportunities are made available for officials. Most games were covered during the season and referee courses continued to be held. The National All Star Tournament was hosted in Prince Albert and was a great success. In addition, the 2005 Canada Summer Games were held in Regina and Moose Jaw which were also a success based on the impressions of the game officials. A new 4 field indoor facility was due to open in January 2006 that will certainly boost the game.

Alberta: Kevin Jones provided information on activities during 2005. The provincial referee association has struggled and has existed in name only for the last couple of years, effectively consisting of numerous local associations. Most of the senior officials in the province are active within the sphere of referee development and have too little time to be the driving force behind a provincial referee association. Mike Seifert has left the ASA and been replaced by Gary Roy. It is expected that there will be further changes within the referee development committee. Alberta hosted the Senior National Club Championships in Calgary and the CIS Women's in Edmonton. The officiating in both of these events exceeded expectations. The usual round of clinics continue to be held, however, a major concern is why so many officials are choosing not to re-register. The RDC continue to pursue reasons for the drop out rate being so high.

Ontario: Presented by David Cope. David indicated that he had recently assumed the OSRA Presidency from Joe Licandro who had served for 4 years. David had served on the executive since 1998, mainly in the capacity as Treasurer. The 2005 membership of the OSRA had returned to more traditional levels with 1115 members. 25% of members are new and the challenge will be to persuade them to return in 2006. Several branches of the OSRA returned after dropping out of the Association because of concern over the relevance of the referee association. A considerable effort had been extended to win back their support.

OSA CEO, Guy Bradbury, had been the guest speaker at the Association's AGM and indicated he wanted to see their two organizations working together and showed a willingness to listen to suggestions and ideas that will benefit referees. A number of OSA initiatives have been seen in a negative light by some officials and led to a sense of tension with the governing body.

CSA Referee Committee: Kevin Jones brought greetings from CSA President, Andy Sharpe and Director Technical, Mike Trafficante. The CSA National Program is now performance based with the expectation that members of the Program will exceed the minimum standards set in the Program Guide. There have been teething problems.

A major concern is that, in general, participants on the Program are ignorant of the requirements of the Guide despite signing for its receipt. Failure to maintain accurate records of their activities and inability to inform the CSA office of their availability has hampered efforts to provide game appointments to several prominent tournaments and high level games. Once again, budgetary constraints severely restricted the movement of officials in 2005 despite a slight increase from 2004. The ongoing education of Program officials is being reviewed and a National Clinic will be held during the 2nd weekend of May – all officials, assessors and instructors will be invited. All Program participants will be expected to attend.

The majority of assessments were well received by officials, though the distribution of the written form is a concern. A better utilization of Soccer-on-Line will hopefully see an improvement. The assessment form has been revised and will be introduced later this year. The Women's Program continues to grow in strength and produce results. Congratulations are extended to Carol-Anne Chenard on her appointment to the FIFA Referee List. Sonia Denoncourt left to join FIFA to run their Women's Referee Development Program and will be sadly missed. Our best wishes go with her for further success in her new position.

Bob Sawtell has performed sterling work behind the scenes using his extensive international network connections to provide numerous opportunities for our officials outside Canada. The CSA continues to support the CSRA and members of its committee regularly participate in the conference calls.

The Secretary asked Kevin why the CSA had re-appointed Jean Francois Corriveau to the FIFA list as an A/R. Jean Francois had previously been an A/R, stepped down for a year and was then appointed as a referee. He was subsequently removed from the list and now has been re-appointed as an A/R. It appeared to send conflicting signals to CONCACAF and FIFA. The answer given was that Jean Francois preferred to be an A/R.

Elections: 1st V.Pres. Tony Troughton was acclaimed for a two year term
Secretary: Eric Evans acclaimed for a two year term

Fees for 2007. Following a proposal by the Treasurer, the fees for 2007 were increased from \$3.00 to \$3.50 per member.

Other Business: Bob Sawtell reported that there was a move to re-activate the BC Referee Committee and that BCSA was still looking to appoint a Director of Referee Development.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20pm for Lunch – there being no other business.